



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF FISHERY COORDINATION

For Immediate Release

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Hope for a 1943 pack of 1,000,000 cases of canned large Maine sea herring, not previously produced in quantity because of unsatisfactory preservation methods, was expressed today by Fishery Coordinator Harold L. Ickes.

Experimental packs of this species, the smaller members of which are canned as Maine sardines, have been put up for export and have proved satisfactory. More than 100,000 cases had been packed by mid-September.

The million-case pack-30,000,000 pounds--will be purchased almost entirely by the Federal Government. The result of the new experiment, the Coordinator indicated will result in an increase of 30,000,000 pounds of protein food to supplement the Nation's war-time meat diet.

The experiments which have made the new product possible are being conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, Agricultural Marketing Administration of the Department of Agriculture, and the fish-canning and can manufacturing industries in Maine, working together through the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries.

Previous attempts to can the large-sized sea herring in small quantities for local use near supply sources have been made, it was explained; but because normal canning procedures had not insured a firm-meated result, the product had never been suitable for general merchandising and wide-range shipment.

Government and industrial technologists began their investigation by determining the effect of various conditions of brining and lengths of pre-cooking time prior to processing. Later they opened the herring so canned and tested the contents for firmness, color, odor, taste, and other qualities which would guarantee the product suitable for distant shipping and distribution.

Completed tests indicate that the large sea herring can be canned successfully for general use. When experiments still under way have determined the best methods, technologists will make, in conjunction with these tests, a survey of canning equipment in Maine which is adaptable to that type of preservation. Co-~~operative~~ measures will then be undertaken to get maximum results from present facilities, and to expand facilities where possible.

Preservation of sea herring is only one phase of a broad program undertaken by the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries to bring into use as food a large variety of fish which now are caught but not landed because their size or species is unpopular though suitable for table use.